



PHOTO: LAURA MAHONY PHOTOGRAPHY

Laura Abramson-Pritchard

As an art history major at Boston University, Laura Abramson-Pritchard remembers spending hours staring at paintings by Vermeer, the renowned Dutch artist. "I studied art from a sociological perspective. I always wanted to know what the people were wearing and doing, but my real interest was with what the rooms looked like," says the owner of Camellia Interior Design in Denver who eventually turned that fascination into a profession. "I realized early on that it's all about environments, and I wanted to figure out what it is that makes people feel most at home."

The designer selected a palette of pinks, taupes, greens, and creams on the walls to complement the furnishings and accessories, creating a classic, traditional look

For this interior designer who hails from the South, the beauty is in the details. By Mindy Pantiel
Photography by Kimberly Gavin







Graceful lines, traditional finishes and painstaking attention to detail combine to create a refined, comfortable home

SOUTHERN CHARM

For Abramson-Pritchard and her husband Keith and their two children, that notion of home was strongly connected to their roots in Jackson, Mississippi. Eight years ago, drawn to the healthy lifestyle that has hooked more than one low lander, the family relocated to the Mile High City with Abramson-Pritchard determined to bring some of that signature southern aesthetic with her. "I knew we would miss the softness and warmth that defines southern design and that it would be a challenge to find a house that had those qualities," says the designer. After building a home in the Country Club neighborhood, the family moved to an existing residence in Lowry. "This house had good bones in the way of trimwork and high ceilings but it was going to take some creativity to infuse it with the sensibility I wanted," she says.

Abramson-Pritchard began the process with fresh paint for all the walls and moldings. "In the South the moldings are almost

always painted Navajo white with a soft wall color. It's rare to find a strong contrast," she says. "Instead, it's all about transitions."

In her home, that translated into brushed moldings—"they have more texture than sprayed," she says, and a palette of pinks, taupes, greens, and creams selected to complement the furnishings and accessories. "It's important to establish a dialogue between the various elements. How the curtains speak to the wall color or the way the throw pillow talks to the sofa is how you establish harmony and create a room that makes you want to be in it," she adds.

DESIGN CUES

In the living room that conversation started with a very simple turned arm wrapped sofa upholstered in a flower pattern fabric. "The pattern was fresh but with an aesthetic like you'd see in an older home, and there's nothing more southern than a floral print," says Abramson-Pritchard, who also took design cues from the home's very traditional staircase. "The architecture definitely had English overtones and this fabric had that Old World feel." Rounding out the living room are a pair of Rose Tarlow chairs—the designer cites Tarlow as one her key influences, and a tufted blue velvet ottoman that does double duty as a coffee table and foot rest. "The ottoman is a grounding element that brings a sense of strength and seriousness to the space," she says.

The welcoming room also benefited from some renovation work that involved replacing an original wall that separated the main area from the music room with French doors. "I wanted to open the spaces up so you could see all the way to the trees outside and bring in a punch of nature," she says.





ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Making the adjacent kitchen fit with the new scheme required major changes to the island, including making it smaller, painting the cabinets green, adding English-style hardware, and replacing the granite top with walnut. "The green and walnut gave the room the warmth it was lacking," says the designer, who added a freestanding wood buffet de corps to further cozy up the space.

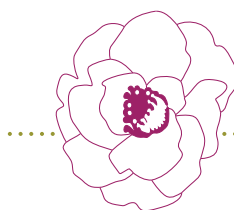
The English theme continues in the formal dining room where the entry was widened to create a more gracious opening, and Chippendale style chairs ring the round table, selected to invite conversation. According to the designer the petite light fixture with its delicate porcelain flowers was the perfect final statement. "It's small for the space but so beautiful and unusual. It's the kind of detail that despite its size draws attention to itself," she says.

Throughout the house the designer's painstaking attention to detail is evident everywhere, from the thoughtful pairing of a custom-striped lamp shade with carved wood base to the addition of trim to the master bedroom ceiling that makes the linen wall covering pop. "In this house, detail was about things like how to trim the edge of pillow or the right tassel for a curtain edge," says Abramson-Pritchard. "In other style homes a detail might appear in the profile of an arm chair or the curve of table leg. In different situations it plays out in different ways but there's no question it's these seemingly little things that customize a house and make it special." 🌸

MINDY PANTIEL FREQUENTLY WRITES ABOUT ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN. HER ARTICLES HAVE APPEARED IN *TRADITIONAL HOME*, *INTERIORS*, *METROPOLITAN HOME*, AND MANY OTHER NATIONAL PUBLICATIONS. SHE IS CURRENTLY CO-AUTHORING A BOOK ON GREEN ROOF GARDEN DESIGN FOR TIMBER PRESS.



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